

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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R 071115Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5589

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

USLO PEKING

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E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: PINT PFOR CH NP

SUBJ: KING'S PRESS SECRETARY GIVES VIEWS

ON HUA KUO - FENG

1. DURING COURSE OF COURTESY CALL OF KING'S PRESS SECRETARY
(AND DE FACTO FOREIGN MINISTER) CHIRAN THAPA, AMBASSADOR
MAYTAG ASKED HIS VIEWS ON CHINA IN POST-MAO PERIOD.

2. THAPA REPLIED THAT IN HIS VIEW QUESTION OF MAO'S
SUCCESSION HAS ALREADY BEEN DECIDED AND THAT HUA- KUO-FENG
HAD SOFFICIENT SUPPORT FROM PARTY AND POPULATION AT LARGE
TO RETAIN CONTROL. HUA, ACCORDING TO HAPA WHO RECENTLY MET
WITH HIM FOR THREE DAYS IN SZECHUAN, HAD DEMONSTRATED HIS
LEADERSHIP ABILITIES. IN ADDITION HE APPEARED TO COMMAND
GENUINE RESPECT FROM PEOPLE AND HAD ADDED QUALIFICATION OF
BEING DEVELOPMENT EXPERT, PARTICULARLY IN AGRICULTURE.

3. THAPA SAID THE HE PERSONALLY EXPECTED CONFLICT AND POWER
STRUGGLE TO GO ON FOR SOME TIME, PARTLY AS A RESULT OF MAO'S
POLITICAL HERITAGE WHICH HAD ENCOURAGED OPPOSITION WITHIN
CHINA. NONETHELESS HE FELT THAT AS IN PAST THIS STURGGLE
WOULD BE CAREFULLY CONTAINED AND CONTROLLED AND THAT HUA
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WOULD EVENTUALLY SUCCEED AS PARTY CHAIRMAN.

4. IN RESPONSE TO DIRECT QUESTION THAPA SAID THAT HE HAD BEEN PERSONALLY IMPRESSED BY HUA DURING COURSE OF HIS RECENT TALKS. IN PREVIOUS CONVERSATION WITH EMBASSY OFFICER THAPA ELABORATED TO SAY THAT ALTHOUGH HUA HAD LITTLE OF PERSONAL MAGNETISM OF CHOU EN-LAI, HE CERTAINLY APPEARED TO COMMAND ALL NECESSARY DETAILS OF A NEGOTIATION, YET STILL RETAIN A SENSE OF THE IMPORTANT FUNDAMENTALS OF ANY GIVEN PROBLEM.

5. COMMENT: WE PASS THAPA'S VIEWS ALONG FOR WHAT THEY MAY BE WORTH. HE FANCIES HIMSELF SOMETHING OF AN EXPERT ON CHINESE AFFAIRS, HAVING STUDIES BOTH THE CHINESE LANGUAGE AND ECONOMIC HISTORY IN ENGLAND AND THE UNITED STATES. THAPA ALSO HAS THE REPUTATION PERHAPS NOT JUSTIFIED, OF BEING "PRO-CHINESE." THERE IS NO QUESTION, HOWEVER, THAT THAPA BELIEVES IN THE IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING A STRONG RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NEPAL AND THE PRC.

MAYTAG

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